
 AQUACULTURE ASC AQUACULTURE

ASC logo for responsibly farmed seafood:

coming soon to a supermarket near you!



*Regal Springs tilapia farm
Photo courtesy of ASC*

Since the summer of 2012, certified responsibly farmed seafood bearing the ASC logo is available in the market. Farm audits for Tilapia and Pangasius are underway. Audit capacity for other species will become available during the coming year. The Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) has started to realise its ambition of becoming the world's leading programme for responsibly farmed seafood.

Over half of all the seafood consumed globally already comes from aquaculture. The market launch of ASC's independent and third party certification program provides an essential tool to demonstrate responsible farming and purchasing. The ASC logo communicates to consumers that the product they are buying comes from farms committed to minimising the potential negative environmental and social impacts of their production.

Fastest-growing food production system

Approximately 950 million people in the world rely on seafood, both wild-caught and farmed, as their primary source of protein. The demand will grow as the world's population is expected to increase by almost 30 percent over the next 40 years. Over the same period the seafood consumption is expected to double.

Aquaculture is the fastest-growing food production system in the world and its growth is expected to continue. It can produce large volumes of nutritious, and high-quality seafood. However, as the industry expands so does its footprint on the environment and society. For a sustainable future, it is crucial to minimise the potential negative impacts of aquaculture: protecting mangroves and vulnerable aquatic environments, reducing water pollution, eliminating

inappropriate use of antibiotics and using responsibly sourced fishmeal in feed, as well as adopting internationally acceptable social standards. These measures and more are enshrined in ASC's standards for responsible aquaculture. Minimising these impacts is core to ASC's Mission and Vision.

An Initiative of WWF and The Sustainable Trade Initiative

The Aquaculture Stewardship Council was founded by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and IDH (The Sustainable Trade Initiative) in 2010, as an independent not-for-profit organisation to manage the global standards for responsible aquaculture. The ASC Supervisory Board, Technical Advisory Group and Technical Working Groups include aquaculture producers, seafood processors, retail and food service companies, scientists, and NGOs dedicated to promoting the best environmental and social choice in farmed seafood.

Credible and robust ASC standards based on science and best practices

The ASC standards were created by the Aquaculture Dialogues, a series of open and transparent roundtable processes. They were coordinated by WWF and engaged over 2,200 participants. The ASC standards have the following attributes:

- **Science-based:** The ASC standards have been developed with input from the world's leading aquaculture scientists and such input will continue to guide the development of the standards and the program generally.

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- **Performance-based:** The standards do not prescribe to producers what practices to use to reduce or eliminate the impacts of aquaculture. Rather, the standards provide targets to reach if producers want to meet the standard. How they do so will be their choice. This encourages innovation and continuous improvement on the farms.
- **Metrics-based:** The standards are measurable, which makes them objective and verifiable. This provides understanding of why producers have met the standards, enhancing broad credibility in the program. Being able to measure impact reduction demonstrates to concerned stakeholders that the environmental footprint of the industry is being minimised.
- **Created by a diverse and balanced group of stakeholders:** More than 2,200 people from all over the world are participating in the Dialogues because they share a common objective – a desire to see responsible aquaculture practices widely enshrined by the industry.
- **Focusing on key impacts:** The standards are focused on reducing a set number of key impacts instead of a long list of issues. This simplifies the certification scheme verification process providing an incentive rather than a barrier to participation.
- **Following ISEAL guidelines:** Each Dialogue followed a set of processes that were in line with the guidelines for standard setting developed by the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling Alliance (ISEAL).

The ASC Logo for responsibly farmed seafood: less impact on the environment and society

ASC has developed a logo for responsibly farmed seafood. This reassures consumers when they purchase their responsibly farmed seafood. The on-pack logo and claim inform buyers that their seafood comes from farms that use responsible methods that minimises the footprint on the environment and society.

The use of the ASC logo on packaging is subject to permission. Products from



Shrimp farming
Photo courtesy of ASC

certified farms that are allowed to use the ASC logo have met rigorous environmental and social criteria. Objective and metric-driven farm assessment are delivered by independent third party auditors. All certified fish farms are assessed on criteria such as the origins of the feed, water management, the working conditions of employees, environmental impact and animal welfare.

The ASC consumer logo was officially launched in March 2012. The logo underwent rigorous consumer testing to gauge its commercial market impact. It was also tested with leading European and North American seafood retailers and manufacturers.

In the summer of 2012 a range of Tilapia products were the first farmed species to be recognised as responsibly produced through the use of the ASC logo. Later that year the logo also featured on responsibly farmed Pangasius products. Both species have gained a lot in popularity recently and are traded in substantial volumes. Over the period 2012 to 2013 more products, covering additional species will become available.

Sign up for the ASC Aquaculture Newsflash to stay up to date with the latest news about ASC's exciting certification and labelling programme via our website www.asc-aqua.org

■ ASC

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